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UNCLAS VILNIUS 000986

SIPDIS

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COPENHAGEN FOR DHS - LPARAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [CVIS](#) [KFRD](#) [LH](#)

SUBJECT: VILNIUS BEGINS YEAR-LONG B1/B2 VALIDATION STUDY

REF: VILNIUS 410

[1](#)1. SUMMARY: We have begun a year-long validation study of Lithuanian B1/B2 visa applicants to determine the overstay rate for the period November 2004 to November 2005. We have consulted with CA/FPP to ensure that our study will be statistically valid and produce comprehensive information to help guide future visa adjudication decisions. By performing this study, we are following through on our promise to the GOL to reassess Lithuania's overstay rate as part of the Visa Waiver Roadmap process. END SUMMARY.

New Validation Study

[1](#)2. We have started work on a validation study of all issued B1/B2 visas for Lithuanian applicants during the year-long period between November 2004 and November 2005. This study will provide us with an approximate overstay rate, within a small margin of error, for all Lithuanian business and tourist visitors over an extensive period of time. The study will also provide statistical results by demographic group, such as by age, region of residence, and occupation, and will thereby help improve our adjudication decision-making.

Methodology

[1](#)3. We are implementing this validation study for the first time in a "rolling" fashion -- i.e., we will perform checks continuously, rather than performing a one-time study that requires a large number of man-hours at a fixed time. A rolling validation study offers the advantages of increased flexibility for our staff, continuous data on visa use, and decreased numbers of cases that cannot be determined.

[1](#)4. We will issue an estimated 3700 total B1/B2 visas to Lithuanian citizens during the time period of the study. We estimate our maximum overstay rate at 20%, which requires a minimum sample size of 682. In consultation with CA/FPP, we have set our sampling interval at 1/5. We therefore are checking the return of every fifth randomly selected case, which will produce a sample size of approximately 740. This sample size will provide results with a standard error of well less than 5% at a 95% confidence interval. We are using the Ad Hoc Template and database program provided by FPP to draw a random sample and to conduct the study.

Comment: Important Element of the Visa Waiver Roadmap

[1](#)5. We are following through on our promise to the GOL, as part of our Visa Waiver Roadmap agreement (reftel), to perform a new, detailed validation study with data after Lithuania's May 2004 accession to the European Union. This study will provide a reliable, accurate overstay rate for Lithuanian B1/B2 applicants to evaluate Lithuania's progress on reaching the requirements for the Visa Waiver Program. Such data will bolster our public diplomacy efforts to encourage Lithuanians to use their visas properly.